

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 8, line 6, with the following amended paragraph:

Therefore, when compressed air containing about 80% of nitrogen and 20% of oxygen is fed into the inside of the hollow fiber membrane 40, oxygen 152 having a higher permeation rate being higher than that of nitrogen goes out from the inside of the hollow fiber membrane 40 to the outside in preference. Thus, the closer to the outlet, the lower concentration of oxygen in the air flowing in the inside of the hollow fiber membrane 40. Consequently, high-concentration nitrogen gas is obtained.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 6, line 24, with the following amended paragraph:

The compressed air stored in the air tank is fed into a hollow fiber membrane 40 through the pipeline 101, a pre-filter 20 for eliminating foreign matters in the compressed air, the pipeline 102, a micromist filter 30 ~~102~~ for eliminating micro foreign matters, and the pipeline 103.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 17, line 20 with the following amended paragraph:

In this embodiment, the second heat exchanger 290 is provided so as to utilize heat generated in the deoxidizing chamber 50. Therefore, according to the condition in which heat is generated in the deoxidizing chamber 50, the first heat exchanger 230 may be omitted. Moreover, the positions of the first heat exchanger 230 and the second head exchanger 290 ~~90~~

may be inverted from the standpoint of the compressed air flow.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 18, line 6, with the following amended paragraph:

Fig. 5 shows a fifth embodiment of the invention. The elements similar to those in the third embodiment are designated by the same reference numerals, and the repetitive explanation for those will be omitted. The difference between these embodiments are that an air dryer 330 for drying the compressed air and a ~~PAS-type~~ PSA-type nitrogen gas generator 340 are provided instead of the first heat exchanger 230, the hollow fiber membrane 40 and the throttle valve 41 in the third embodiment.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 19, line 13, with the following amended paragraph:

Subsequently, the dryer 330 supplies dried compressed air to the following ~~PAS~~ PSA nitrogen gas generator 340.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 19, line 15, with the following amended paragraph:

The ~~PAS~~ PSA nitrogen gas generator 340 separates and extracts nitrogen gas from the compressed air by constituting the first and second adsorption tanks 341 and 342 each accommodating a kind of activated carbon that has large oxygen adsorption capacity and that provides a large difference in adsorption rate between oxygen and nitrogen, and by utilizing the properties of adsorption material that adsorbs oxygen gas under high pressure and that desorbs oxygen gas under low pressure.